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ABSTRACT

In the second year of a federally funded program encouraging disadvantaged youth to prepare for college, 1,955 parents and 1,520 students at 23 middle schools in southern West Virginia were surveyed concerning their perceptions of and aspirations for postsecondary education. Findings indicate that students and their parents had a generally positive view of their academic abilities and efforts. Parent involvement in school-based activities was limited. Students felt fairly confident and successful about their learning. However, they did not view their learning as interesting or exciting or believe that teachers valued their thoughts or feelings. Student and parent aspirations for postsecondary education were high, but students did not have a real understanding of what they should be doing to prepare for college. Students viewed parents and teachers as their best sources of information about academic choices, but only about a third of parents were familiar with high school graduation and college entrance requirements. Very few students and parents had a realistic estimate of tuition expense at a 4-year in-state public college. Recommendations are offered to program staff concerning information dissemination to students and parents, parent training, and data collection. (Contains 18 references and the survey questionnaire.) (TD)

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West Virginia Department of Education GEAR UP Project:

Year 2 Baseline Survey (2001-2002)

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

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West Virginia Department of Education
GEAR UP Project:

Year 2 Baseline Survey (2001-2002)

May 2002

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1999, the U.S. Department of Education funded 21 state and 164 college and middle school partnership grants for Project GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs). These grants focused on encouraging disadvantaged youth to have high expectations, stay in school, and take academically rigorous courses to prepare them for college. A second round of funding awards was granted in 2000, with GEAR UP monies allotted to 7 state departments of education and 73 partnerships.

The 2000 West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) five-year partnership grant includes early intervention, partnership, and scholarship components for its mostly rural constituents in southern West Virginia. Collaborating agencies include eight county boards of education (Clay, Hampshire, Lincoln, Mason, McDowell, Monroe, Pocahontas, and Roane) and a number of state, business, and organizational partners. The grant initially funds academic and support services for seventh-grade students and their parents and follows those students through the following four years. In addition, a new pool of seventh graders is added each successive year.

As part of its GEAR UP grant, WVDE contracted with AEL to administer and analyze surveys to gather baseline information on incoming seventh-grade students' and parents' awareness and perceptions of, interest in, and aspirations for students' postsecondary education. This report summarizes findings from the second administration of the surveys in September 2001 at 25 middle schools within the eight-county region. The main objectives are to analyze and summarize regional GEAR UP baseline survey data.

Two surveys were used for data collection—one for students and one for parents (one copy for mothers and one copy for fathers). The two separate student surveys used last year were merged into one comprehensive survey. Both the parent and student surveys were converted to a format compatible for scanning and, based on data from the first-year administration, several item stems and response options were clarified. The student survey contained 90 selected-response items and the parent survey contained 30 selected-response items, with various response options. To assess the degree to which items measure the same construct (internal consistency), Cronbach Alpha reliability estimates were computed for this set of respondent scores: the student survey coefficient was .91; the parent survey coefficient was .77 for both mothers and fathers.

In July 2001, AEL staff photocopied the final surveys and assembled student packets (containing a cover page, a student survey, and two copies of the parent survey) to be distributed to school staff. An AEL staff member delivered the boxed materials to WVDE the first week of August. Each participating school received an appropriate number of student packets, as well as envelopes for returning the completed surveys to AEL. The total number of seventh-grade students at the participating schools was 1,900.

Teachers were instructed to complete the demographic cover page, transfer the corresponding identification number to all three surveys, and then remove the cover page before distributing the packets to students. The cover pages were to be collected and sent to WVDE staff. Students were given time during a class period to complete their survey and were instructed to take the parent surveys home for their parents to complete and then return them to their teacher. After all surveys for a school were completed and returned, a staff member packaged the materials in the envelopes provided and mailed them to AEL.

While no specific deadline was given for returning the completed surveys, school staff were urged to administer them as soon as feasible so that planning for GEAR UP activities could be finalized and project implementation could begin. Of the 25 participating schools, 17 returned their surveys in September, 5 in October, and 1 in November; 2 schools did not return any surveys.

Response rates varied by type of survey. A total of 1,520 usable student surveys were received (80% return rate). Parental participation rates are estimates only, based on the assumption that each student has both a male and female parent or guardian: 1,106 mother surveys were received (58% return rate) and 849 father surveys were received (45% return rate). These return rates are all lower than last year's, which were 86%, 69%, and 55%, respectively.

In order to provide timely data to WVDE staff for finalizing GEAR UP activities, data analyses and summarization were completed in April 2002. School-specific, county-specific, and regional summaries were prepared on survey facsimiles, with response percentages printed in red ink to aid readability. In early May, the following materials were transmitted to FSC staff: a complete set of the school, county, and regional summaries for WVDE use; county-specific summaries for sharing with the eight county GEAR UP coordinators; and school-specific summaries for sharing with principals from the 23 participating schools who returned surveys.

Findings are presented for the regional overview by type of survey and include narrative text, a table, and 18 figures. Some of the key conclusions and recommendations follow.

Conclusions

- Overall, students seem to have a positive view of their academic abilities and of the effort they put into their studies. More than three fourths view themselves as good or excellent students. Further, nearly two thirds believe they work as hard as other students and about a third report that they work harder or much harder. Parents have a similar perception of the effort their child puts into education. About a third perceive that their child works harder or much harder than other children and approximately half believe their child works about the same; about three fourths believe that their child is either an excellent or good student.

- Despite parents' satisfaction with the amount of family involvement encouraged by the school, their participation in school-based activities seems to be limited in scope. About two thirds of the mothers and one third of the fathers report that they occasionally or frequently meet with their

child's teachers. However, nearly three times as many of the fathers report never meeting with a teacher (28% compared to 11%). About three fourths of the parents report they occasionally or frequently attend activities at their child's school.

- Students report being well supported in the areas of confidence to take action and sense of accomplishment. They report feeling less well supported in fun and excitement and belonging. In other words, while students report feeling fairly confident and successful about their learning, they do not seem to view their learning as particularly interesting or exciting and do not feel that teachers particularly value their thoughts or feelings.

- Overall, student and parent aspirations are high for the student's postsecondary education. About two thirds of the students believe that they will obtain either a bachelor or advanced degree, and also believe their parents want them to get a bachelor or advanced degree. A higher number of parents (about three fourths) report wanting their child to obtain either degree.

- Students view parents and teachers as their best sources of information about academic choices and most value their input to educational decision making. However, only about a third of the parents are familiar with college entrance requirements and believe they have enough information about high school graduation requirements.

- Very few of the students and parents seem to have a realistic estimate of the tuition expense for one year at a four-year in-state public college. Less than a fourth of both groups selected the expense range that included the state and national average tuition expenses ($2,548 and $3,506 respectively).

Recommendations

- Encourage student participation in tutoring and mentoring programs, especially in math.

- Emphasize the importance of college-preparatory courses and encourage students to plan on taking such courses, especially physics, calculus, and trigonometry.

- Provide students and parents with information about and entrance requirements for both two- and four-year colleges, as well as for vocational and business schools.

- Provide students and parents with information about and requirements for various financial aid sources for financing postsecondary education.

- Work to find ways to increase parents' involvement in the academic lives of their children, beyond occasionally meeting with teachers or attending school activities.

- Work to find ways to make learning more interesting and exciting for students.

- Work to find ways of increasing students' sense of belonging in the school community.

INTRODUCTION

GEAR UP Description

In August 1999, President Clinton announced $120 million in GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) grants to 21 states and 164 partnerships of colleges and middle schools across the country (Office of the Press Secretary, 1999). Another $45 million in new grants were awarded in 2000 to 7 states and 73 partnerships (Office of the Press Secretary, 2000). These U.S. Department of Education-funded grants were to encourage disadvantaged youth to have high expectations, to stay in school, and to take academically rigorous courses to prepare them for college. GEAR UP differs from other federal programs in that it

- begins no later than the seventh grade to help ensure that students take appropriate college preparatory courses and follows them through high school
- transforms schools by working with entire grades of students (cohort or whole-grade approach) to provide a comprehensive array of services including mentoring, tutoring, counseling, strengthening the curriculum, professional development for teachers and staff, parent involvement, after-school programs, summer academic and enrichment programs, and college visits
- leverages local resources by encouraging colleges to partner with low-income middle schools and leverages nonfederal resources with a 1-for-1 match requirement
- provides college scholarships and 21st Century Scholar Certificates (early notification of students' eligibility for financial aid)
- bolsters state efforts by supporting early college preparation programs (Office of the Press Secretary, 1999)

West Virginia Department of Education GEAR UP Grant

In 2000, the U.S. Department of Education awarded the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) $10 million over five years to implement GEAR UP in eight county school districts. Students in 34 elementary, middle, and high schools are to be served via this grant.

The WVDE five-year partnership grant includes early intervention, partnership, and scholarship components for its mostly rural constituents in southwest West Virginia. Collaborating agencies include eight county boards of education (Clay, Hampshire, Lincoln, Mason, McDowell, Monroe, Pocahontas, and Roane) and a number of state, higher education, business, and organizational partners. Of the 34 schools within the region served by the grant, 30 (88%) have a rural outside MSA Johnson code and 4 (12%) have a small town Johnson code, a system used by the National Center for Education Statistics (2002) to assign locale types. All 55 of West Virginia's counties have been classified as *Appalachia* by the Appalachian Regional Commission (2000).

The WVDE GEAR UP grant proposes to support students via

- early intervention through tutoring and mentoring that will provide opportunities for more students to attend college and succeed
- concerted efforts of parents, schools, and community that will provide more students with the personal support needed to succeed
- early parental involvement in career and educational planning resulting in more students being prepared to attend and succeed in post high school educational programs
- early awareness of scholarship opportunities, student loans, and other financial information that will lead to greater numbers of students extending their education
- academically challenging courses in middle and high schools that will better prepare students for college or technical schools (WVDE, 2001)

Purpose and Objectives of Study

As part of its scope of work in the GEAR UP grant, WVDE contracted with AEL to administer and analyze student and parent surveys to gather baseline information on incoming seventh-grade students' and parents' awareness and perceptions of, interest in, and aspirations for students' postsecondary education. This report summarizes findings from the second administration of the surveys in September 2001 at 25 middle and junior high schools within the eight-county region. (For results of the first baseline surveys, see Howley & Cowley, 2001.) The main objectives are to analyze and summarize regional GEAR UP baseline survey data. The primary audiences are WVDE staff and GEAR UP funders. Secondary audiences include West Virginia GEAR UP partners, AEL staff, and others interested in student and parent aspirations.

Review of Literature

Student aspirations extend far beyond individual dreams or ambitions. Aspirations encompass individual and family educational goals, career choices, and self-concept. Quaglia and Perry (1993, p. 2) suggest that aspirations are composed of two components: inspiration and ambitions. "*Ambitions* represents an individual's ability to look ahead and invest in the future. *Inspiration* can be described as the individual's ability to invest the time, energy, and effort presently to reach their ambitions." (For a historical perspective on the aspirations construct, see Quaglia and Cobb's 1996 "Toward a Theory of Student Aspirations," *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 12*[3], 127-132.)

Researchers at the University of Maine's National Center for Student Aspirations have identified eight conditions that support high levels of aspirations in youth: achievement, belonging, curiosity, empowerment, excitement, mentoring, risk taking, and self-confidence (Plucker & Quaglia, 1998). The authors state that these conditions "provide an interpretive template that frames how students can be viewed and how schools can positively support . . . the development of student aspirations" (p. 253). Further research at the University's College of Education and Human Development resulted in modifications to the eight factors related to student aspirations. These eight conditions, which "emphasize the importance of putting the students at the center of any school initiative or program" (University of Maine, 1999a, p. 1), include

- **Belonging:** A relationship between two or more individuals characterized by a sense of connection, support, and community
- **Heroes:** People whom children admire and imitate because of their personal talents
- **Sense of Accomplishment:** In addition to academic success, recognizes effort, perseverance, and citizenship as important signs of children's success
- **Fun and Excitement:** Involves being interested in something, being emotionally involved, or having an intense experience or desire of some kind
- **Spirit of Adventure:** Characterized as a child's ability to take on positive, healthy challenges
- **Curiosity and Creativity:** Characterized as inquisitiveness, eagerness, a strong desire to learn new or interesting things, and a desire to satisfy the mind with new discoveries
- **Leadership and Responsibility:** Children's sense of control and responsibility for their actions and words
- **Confidence to Take Action:** The extent to which children believe in themselves and is related to self-regard, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-respect

Adolescence is characterized by emotional, physical, cognitive, and social transformations. As patterns of thoughts or choices emerge, youth begin to gain a picture of "who they are," which is essential for school to have meaning and purpose. Schools can help facilitate that transformation by providing an environment conducive for students to learn how to usefully and productively manage their time, energy, and efforts in ways that are meaningful to them for the future and yet enjoyable to them in the present (Quaglia & Perry, 1993). Educators can try to influence aspirations with inspiration, realism, and respect (Sizer, 1996). Schools can achieve this, according to Sizer, by attracting "interesting" staff with aspirations of their own, keeping schools small to allow more than casual interactions, making time for students to pursue interests, providing "aspirer" models from the community, and being flexible. He encourages, "Expect every youngster to have a worthy passion of some sort. Work at it, make it a priority, speak about it, make exceptions for it" (p. 126). Quaglia and Cobb (1996) state that youth are pressured toward uniformity by social groups and suggest that schools combat this mind-set by fostering an environment that encourages diversity, excellence, and risk taking among students.

Cobb, McIntire, and Pratt (as cited in Quaglia & Perry, 1993) report that rural youth believe that their parents are more supportive of them taking full-time jobs, attending vocational schools, or joining the military than going to college. In addition, Walberg and Greenberg (1996) note that rural youth also face economic decline, limited work opportunities, and increased isolation. Yet youth are a rural community's greatest asset. When youth migrate from their hometowns, rural communities suffer a loss of talent and vitality crucial to the development or maintenance of a desirable future for these communities (Ley, Nelson, & Beltyukova, 1996). Factors affecting out-migration include limited economic opportunities, lack of faith in a community to sustain favorable economic conditions, and a willingness of rural youth to look elsewhere for opportunities. All of these, combined with overall lower aspirations for postsecondary education, make it more difficult for rural youth to achieve career and economic success within West Virginia.

Howley, Harmon, and Leopold (1996) note that educators and community leaders believe that rural youth are becoming less involved in their hometown communities---this disengagement may reinforce students' inclination to migrate elsewhere. To encourage rural youth to remain active participants in their local communities, community members and schools must encourage and facilitate the development of rural students' aspirations and, at the same time, transform local communities into appealing places where young adults can prosper and grow while contributing to the quality of rural life.

According to Kampits (1996), rural youth have significantly higher graduation rates from high school than urban youth, yet they are less likely to pursue college degrees and are less likely to graduate from high school with firm plans for the future. In addition, low-income youth are less likely than more affluent youth to enroll in more demanding college-preparatory courses. She challenges educators to focus on the needs of the students:

> Regardless of high expectations—even regulations—that students will learn and demonstrate specific knowledge and understanding, first they must want to learn, be inspired to learn, and understand why they should learn. In short, they must be full partners, not just subjects, in the learning process (Kampits, 1996, p. 176).

METHODS

Instrumentation

In July 2001, AEL staff revised the student and parent surveys. There were three major components of these revisions. First, the two student surveys (one developed by AEL and Fairmont State College staff; the other provided by the U.S. Department of Education) were merged into one comprehensive survey that eliminated duplicate items and grouped the remaining items by topic. Second, both the parent and student surveys were converted to a format compatible for an optical mark reader and scanning software program. Third, several item stems and response options were clarified based on data obtained from the first-year surveys.

Student survey. This survey contained 90 selected-response items utilizing a variety of response options. Students were asked about their school work, knowledge about college, plans for the future, background, and aspirations. Similar to last year, 28 items from the University of Maine's *Students Speak* survey were included to capture data on the eight components related to aspirations (belonging, heroes, sense of accomplishment, fun and excitement, spirit of adventure, curiosity and creativity, leadership and responsibility, and confidence to take action) (University of Maine, 1999a). Further, based on a recommendation from last year's report, AEL staff developed 5 additional items to include in the adventure (2) and leadership (3) components in an attempt to strengthen their reliability. Students were asked to rate their level of agreement on a 1 to 5 scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) for these 33 items, along with 10 others. For analysis purposes, the eight components formed eight separate subscales (see Table 1 for a listing of the items that comprise each subscale). Since each subscale had a different number of items, item-level subscale means (total subscale score divided by number of items in the subscale) were used to enable cross-subscale comparisons.

To assess the degree to which items measure the same construct (internal consistency), Cronbach Alpha reliability estimates were computed for this set of respondent scores for the region (using interval and ordinal items, excluding demographic items). At .91, the coefficient was deemed to be very satisfactory for this type of instrument. At the subscale level, the coefficients ranged from .65 to .77 and were similar to those obtained by the University of Maine researchers (1999b) and to those obtained last year. The additional items for adventure and leadership did seem to increase the reliability of these subscales. See Table 1 for subscale reliability coefficients.

Parent survey. This survey, drafted by the U.S. Department of Education and modified by AEL staff, contained 30 selected-response items utilizing a variety of response options. Parents were asked to respond to items about their child, their child's future plans, their knowledge about college, and their background. To assess the degree to which items measure the same construct, Cronbach Alpha reliability estimates were computed for both mother and father respondent scores for the region (using interval and ordinal items, excluding demographic items). For the mother scores, the coefficient was deemed satisfactory for this type of instrument at .77, very similar to the coefficient for last year. The coefficient for the father scores remained the same at .77.

Table 1: Aspirations Subscale Items and Alpha Reliability Coefficients

Subscale and Coefficient	AEL Coeff.*	UoM Coeff.*	Items
Belonging	.77	.80	65. Teachers care about my problems and feelings. 66. Teachers respect my thoughts. 74. Teachers value my opinions. 76. I am proud of my school.
Heroes	.65	.66	64. I am a positive role model to other students. 68. I have a strong caring relationship with an adult. 71. Teachers expect me to succeed. 77. Teachers help me to succeed. 84. I have a teacher who is a positive role model for me.
Sense of Accomplishment	.75	.68	69. Teachers care about my success in class. 70. I believe I can always improve. 78. I put forth the necessary effort to reach a goal. 81. Teachers tell me I do a good job when I try my best.
Fun and Excitement	.68	.70	63. I usually have fun in class. 83. Teachers make learning exciting. 86. I am not usually bored in school.
Spirit of Adventure	.67	.59	59. I know what I want and I go after it.** 61. I can select the best way to solve a problem.** 79. Teachers support me when I try something new. 82. I am eager to learn new things. 89. I have opportunities to decide for myself what I learn about in school.
Curiosity and Creativity	.67	.57	67. I seek solutions to complex problems. 80. My courses help me to understand what is happening in my everyday life. 85. Teachers allow me to explore topics I find interesting. 90. Teachers encourage me to ask questions.
Leadership and Responsibility	.67	.44	58. I can take control of situations.** 60. I am a good leader.** 62. I do what I say I will.** 75. I accept responsibility for my actions. 87. Teachers expect me to be a good decision maker.
Confidence to Take Action	.70	.56	72. I am confident in my ability to do well. 73. I take action on causes I believe in. 88. Anyone can succeed if they work hard enough.

*"AEL Coeff." pertains to findings from the research described in this report; "UoM Coeff." pertains to previous University of Maine research.
**Additional items developed by AEL staff.

Coding sheet. To keep respondents' identity anonymous in the analysis phase, students were assigned a unique code number. Coding was done at the school level, usually by the teachers. A Student Demographic Cover Page was completed for each student and included information about the student and parents. Identification codes were comprised of the student's Social Security, a two-digit county code, and a two-digit school code. By including these codes on all surveys, it is possible to compare an individual's responses across surveys throughout the five-year period, as well as link parent and student responses.

Data Collection

The two surveys described above were utilized to gather baseline data from seventh-grade students and their parents from the 25 middle and junior high schools in the eight-county area. The 2001-2002 seventh-grade population for these schools was 1,900. In July 2001, AEL staff photocopied the final surveys and assembled student packets to be distributed to school staff. Each packet contained a one-page demographic cover page printed on blue paper, a seven-page student survey printed on yellow paper, and two copies of the two-page (front/back) parent survey printed on white paper (one copy for mothers and one copy for fathers). Each participating school received an appropriate number of student packets, as well as envelopes for returning the completed surveys to AEL. An AEL staff member delivered the boxed materials to WVDE the first week of August.

Teachers were instructed to complete the demographic cover page, transfer the corresponding identification number to all three surveys, and then remove the cover page before distributing the packets to students. The cover pages were to be collected and sent to WVDE staff. Students were given time during a class period to complete their survey and were instructed to take the parent surveys home for their parents to complete and then return them to their teacher. After all surveys for a school were completed and returned, a staff member packaged the materials in the envelopes provided and mailed them to AEL.

While no specific deadline was given for returning the completed surveys, school staff were urged to administer them as soon as feasible so that planning for GEAR UP activities could be finalized and project implementation could begin. Of the 25 participating schools, 17 returned their surveys in September, 5 in October, and 1 in November; 2 schools did not return any surveys. See Appendix A for a completed SEDCAR Standards Checklist, which documents the data collection methods used in this project (Cooperative Education Data Collection and Reporting [CEDCAR] Standards Project Task Force, 1991).

Data Analyses

In order to scan completed surveys, templates were created using Remark software. As data were being scanned and saved in Remark, spot-checks were completed by staff to ensure scanning accuracy. Further, item response analyses were generated to aid staff in verifying the data files, which were remarkably clean. In February and March 2002, data were scanned by school into student and parent databases and stored both on hard drive and tape backup. Once school analyses were completed, these files were exported to the SPSS statistical analysis software program and merged into county-specific files so that these analyses could be conducted. Finally, the county files were merged into one master file to prepare a regional analysis by survey. The eight student aspirations subscales were created in SPSS, as well.

Response rates varied by survey. A total of 1,520 student surveys were received (80% return rate). As expected, parent participation was lower. A total of 1,106 surveys were received from students' mothers (58% return rate, if one assumes that all students have either a mother or some female guardian such as grandmother or stepmother, which is not ascertainable). A total of 849 surveys were received from students' fathers (45% return rate, making the same assumption about male caregivers). Therefore, response rates for parents should be viewed only as estimates of the population. The return rates all decreased from last year, which were 86%, 69%, and 55%, respectively. See Table 2 for a breakdown of respondents by county and survey.

In order to provide timely data to WVDE staff for finalizing GEAR UP activities, data analyses and summarization were completed in April 2002. School-specific, county-specific, and regional summaries were prepared on survey facsimiles, with response percentages printed in red ink to aid readability. In early May, the following materials were transmitted to WVDE staff: a complete set of the school, county, and regional summaries for WVDE use; county-specific summaries for sharing with the county coordinators; and school-specific summaries for sharing with the principals from the participating schools. See Appendix B for a copy of the regional summary by survey.

Table 2: Number of Respondents by County and Survey

County	Student Survey	Parent Survey (Mothers)	Parent Survey (Fathers)
Clay	144	86	71
Hampshire	242	188	154
Lincoln	222	159	118
Mason	211	159	124
McDowell	244	150	123
Monroe	152	144	114
Pocahontas	95	73	48
Roane	210	147	97
TOTAL	1,520	1,106	849

FINDINGS

This section presents findings from the administration of GEAR UP surveys to seventh-grade students and their parents in the participating schools within the WVDE region. Findings are presented by type of survey.

Student Survey

A total of 1,520 students responded to this survey. However due to missing data (skipped items), the number of respondents changes from item to item and is not reported. Six items related to students' background. Fifty percent of the students were male, and the majority (71%) were 12 years old. Nearly all the students indicated they were White (92%), 4% American Indian or Alaska Native, 2% multiracial, and 1% African American. Less than half of the students (41%) reported having one brother, 29% said that they had no brothers, and 18% indicated that they had two brothers. Likewise, 37% reported having one sister, followed by no sisters (33%), and two sisters (18%). Thirty-eight percent of the students reported that four people live in their home, followed by 23% with five members, 19% with three, and 9% with six.

Twenty-four items related to school and school work. Students were asked who usually helps them with their homework. The most common response was parent or guardian (84%), followed by friend (28%), brother or sister (26%), teacher (17%), grandparent (16%), and some other family member (15%). Students were then asked how hard they worked in school compared with other students. Sixty-one percent said they worked as hard as other students and nearly a third (30%) said they worked harder or much harder (see Figure 1 for further details). When asked what type of student they considered themselves to be, more than three fourths (77%) reported that they were good or excellent students (see Figure 2 for further details).

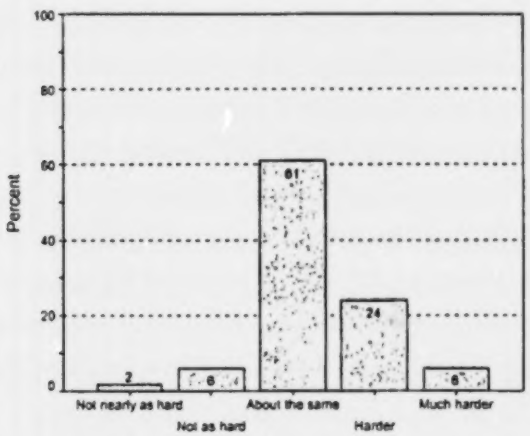

Figure 1: Students' Perceptions of How Hard They Work in School Compared to Other Students

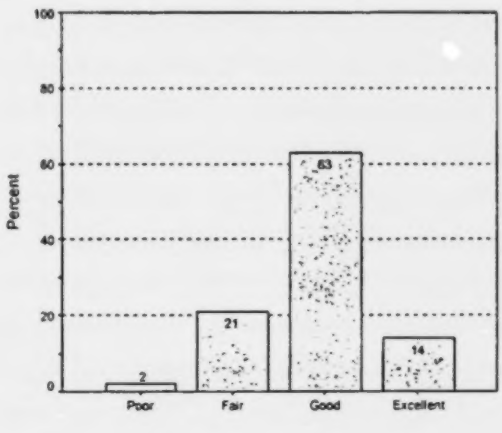

Figure 2: Students' Perceptions of Themselves as Students

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When asked how important it was to them what people thought they should do about their education, nearly all students reported that a parent was very important (90%). This was followed by teacher (74%), grandparent (67%), and principal (60%). Forty percent of the students said other (unidentified) people were not important, followed by religious leader (30%), and sibling (25%) (see Figure 3 for a graphical portrayal of whom students thought were very important in helping them make decisions).

When asked how they were doing in certain subjects, students' responses were fairly similar across all subjects: 81% responded that they were doing well in English, 80% in science, 78% in math, and 70% in history. For students who indicated that they were not doing well, their most frequent explanations were fairly similar for English, history, math, and science: have a C or D (16%, 17%, 21%, 13%, respectively); subject is boring (14%, 18%, 11%, 10%, respectively); don't do well on tests (11%, 12%, 16%, 14%, respectively); and don't like the subject (11%, 11%, 12%, 8%, respectively). When students were asked which subjects they needed help with, 32% indicated math, 21% spelling, and 20% each selected English, science, and social studies (see Figure 4 for further details).

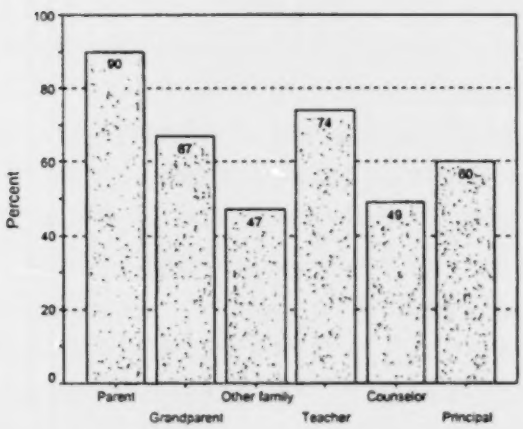

Figure 3: People Who Are Important to Students in Terms of Educational Advice

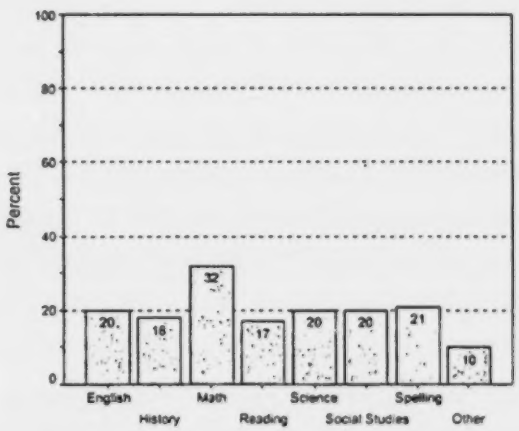

Figure 4: Students' Perceptions of Classes in Which They Need Help

When asked what was their favorite subject in school, 18% of the students indicated math, followed by art and other (14% each), and science (12%). Students were then asked what made a particular subject their favorite. More than half (51%) of the students indicated that they were good at it, 48% indicated that it was fun or cool, 41% indicated that they liked the subject, 39% each said it was easy to understand or that they liked the teacher, 38% said that they liked the activities, and 21% indicated it was challenging.

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When asked which courses they planned on taking in high school, more than half of the students (60%) selected a foreign language. About half selected algebra (52%) or chemistry (49%). One third (33%) selected physics, 22% trigonometry, and 20% calculus.

Students were asked how many hours they spent on homework for specific subjects. About half indicated that they spent a half hour each for English (55%), science (48%), math (47%), and history (47%). Between 15% and 25% of the students indicated they spent an hour per day for these subjects, and between 11% and 20% indicated that they did not have homework in these subjects.

Eighty-seven percent of the students thought they had the ability to go to college and 76% said that they had good study skills. Whereas 59% said that they would be interested in having a "college-type" mentor or buddy, only 20% indicated that they would be interested in attending an after-school tutoring program. Less than half (46%) said that they plan to live in West Virginia when they are 30, and 40% indicated that they plan to be working in West Virginia when they are 30.

Nearly two thirds of the students indicated that they participated in sports (61%), followed by clubs (30%) and student government (18%). Regarding technology, almost three fourths said they used a computer for school projects (71%) or used a computer at home (72%); more than half of these home computers had Internet access (58%). Over two thirds of the students (68%) indicated that they had taken a computer class at school.

Six items related to students' knowledge about college. When asked if they had talked to their school counselor or someone else at their school about the entrance requirements for college, 78% indicated that they had not. More than half (58%) indicated that they had an idea of what courses they should take in high school to prepare them for college. When asked if they had heard of various types of postsecondary schools, 79% indicated that they were aware of a four-year college or university; 66% were aware of a vocational, trade, or business school; and 61% were aware of a two-year community college. Eighty-three percent responded positively when asked if they thought that a person with a college degree typically earns more money in one year than a person without a degree.

When asked how much they thought that one year of tuition cost for a four-year public college in their state, 19% selected $5,001 to $10,000, 18% indicated $10,001 to $15,000, 16% said $1,001 to $5,000, and 13% said $15,001 to $20,000 (see Figure 5 for further details). The actual cost of tuition at a four-year public college in West Virginia is $2,548; the national average is $3,506 (Snyder & Hoffman, 2001).

Students were then asked how important getting an education beyond high school was to their future. More than three fourths (77%) indicated that it was very important, while 12% said that it was somewhat important, 8% indicated that they didn't know, and 3% said that it was not important.

Eleven items related to students' plans for the future. Students were asked what they wanted to be when they grew up. The most common responses were athlete (7%), veterinarian (6%), doctor

(5%), and lawyer or nurse (4% each). Ten percent each identified some other occupation not identified on the survey or didn't know at this point.

Eighty-seven percent of the students indicated that they would continue their education after high school (that is, go to college or attend a trade school). Only 37% said that they had heard of GEAR UP before entering the seventh grade.

Students were asked to identify from whom they received most of their information regarding their options for continuing their education after high school. The majority of students (80%) indicated a parent or guardian, followed by teacher (42%), grandparent (29%), other family member (26%), sibling (20%), and friend (19%) (see Figure 6).

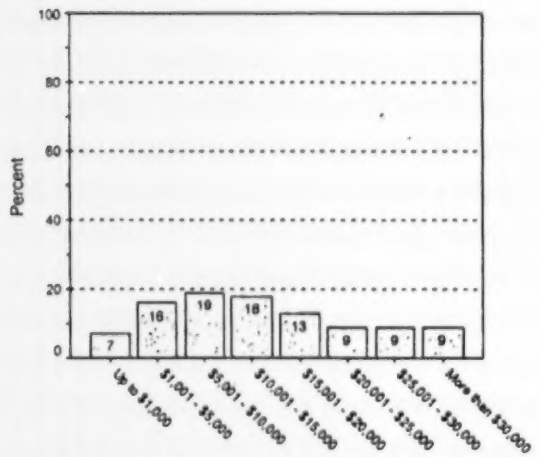

Figure 5: Students' Estimate of Yearly Tuition for an In-State Four-Year Public College

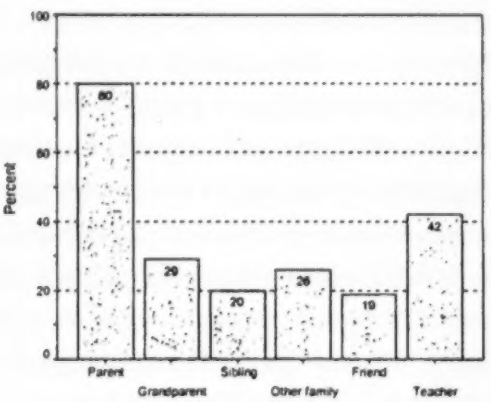

Figure 6: People From Whom Students Get Information on Educational Options

One third of the students (33%) indicated that they wanted to obtain an advanced degree, 28% indicated a bachelor degree; 20% said high school graduation. Almost half (43%) indicated that their father would like them to further their education to an advanced degree and 24% said a bachelor degree. Similarly the students indicated that 46% of the mothers wanted them to further their education to an advanced degree and 24% to a bachelor degree (see Figure 7 for further details).

Students were then asked to indicate the main reason they would not continue their education after high school. Nearly half (47%) indicated they definitely would go on to college. Twelve percent of the students didn't know, 9% said it cost too much, and 4% wanted to join the military. When asked if they thought they would be able to afford to attend a four-year college or university, almost half (46%) of the students said they probably or definitely could afford it; 39% said that they were not sure (see Figure 8 for details).

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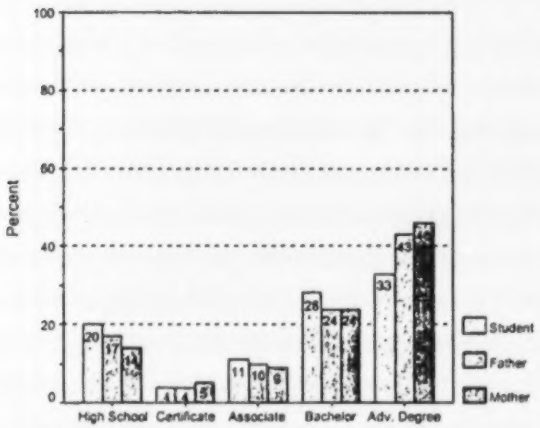

Figure 7: Students' Academic Expectations and Their Perceptions of Their Parents' Expectations

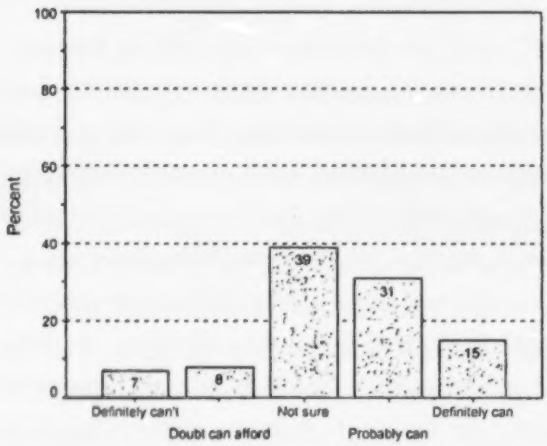

Figure 8: Students' Perceptions of Whether They Can Afford Postsecondary Education

When asked if they had discussed academic requirements for attending a four-year college with any adults in their household, 48% of the students responded that they had. Students were then asked if any of their family members had attended college. Forty percent said their mother had attended, 33% said that a grandparent had attended, 29% indicated a father had attended, and 23% indicated that a sibling had attended college.

Forty-three items related to students' aspirations. Students were asked to rate their level of agreement (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) for 10 items pertaining to post-high school plans. For the following analysis, responses of Agree or Strongly Agree were combined to indicate agreement; responses of Disagree or Strongly Disagree were combined to indicate disagreement.

Seventy-two percent agreed that continuing their education might help them decide what they want to do; 69% agreed that they planned to continue their education after high school, no matter what their career; and 68% agreed that they needed more education or training after high school to obtain a satisfying job. Only 25% agreed that they can obtain a satisfying job without further education and only 17% agreed that they would not be able to afford to continue their education. Seventy-four percent agreed that they wanted to pursue employment to earn money immediately after high school, 51% agreed that they were anxious to begin their career as soon as possible right after high school, and 44% agreed that getting a job right after high school might help them decide what they want to do. Almost two thirds of the students (65%) agreed that the opinions of family members would influence their decision making, while 39% agreed that friends helped in this role.

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The remaining 33 aspirations items were adapted from the National Center for Student Aspirations from the University of Maine's *Students Speak* survey (28) or developed by AEL (5). These items comprise eight subscales of Belonging, Heroes, Sense of Accomplishment, Fun and Excitement, Spirit of Adventure, Curiosity and Creativity, Leadership and Responsibility, and Confidence to Take Action. Again, students were to rate their feelings from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). In order to give an overall sense of agreement, Figure 9 shows the level of agreement (Agree or Strongly Agree) for each of the 33 items grouped by subscale. Students reported most agreement with the beliefs that they can always improve (86%) and that anyone can succeed if they work hard enough (85%). They least agreed that they were positive role models to other students (42%) and that they were usually not bored in school (46%). Although the percentages varied slightly, these items were the same items with which students most and least agreed last year.

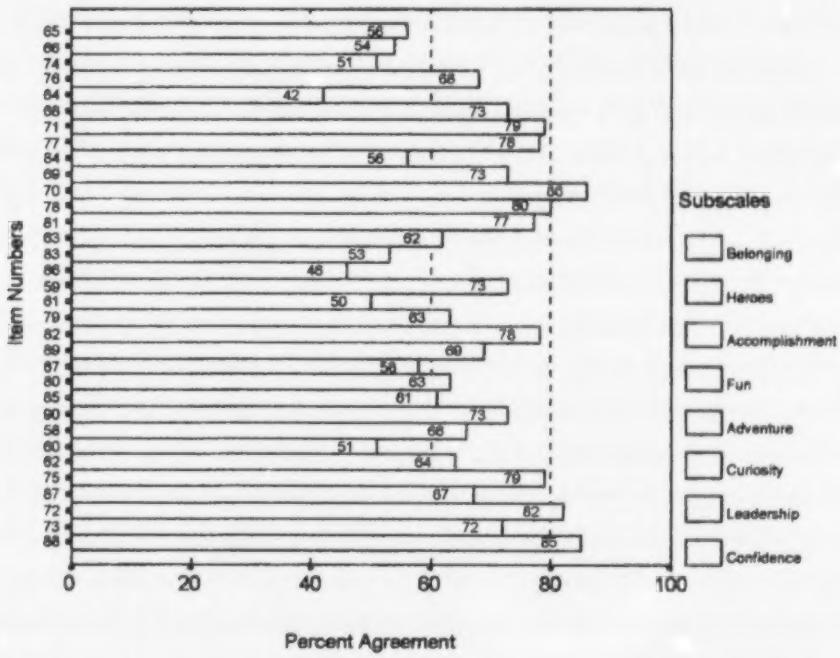

Figure 9: Students' Level of Agreement on Aspirations Subscale Items

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All eight subscales had means ranging within a 1-point spread of 3.36 for the Fun and Excitement subscale to 4.08 for the Confidence to Take Action subscale on the 5-point scale of 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree. Standard deviations for six of the subscales were very similar, ranging only from 0.64 to 0.71. However, the Belonging and the Fun and Excitement subscales had higher standard deviations of 0.81 and 0.93, indicating more variance among respondents' scores for items within these subscales. See Table 3 for descriptive statistics.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Aspirations Subscales

Subscale	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Belonging	1,464	3.58	0.81
Heroes	1,464	3.78	0.65
Sense of Accomplishment	1,456	4.03	0.70
Fun and Excitement	1,464	3.36	0.93
Spirit of Adventure	1,467	3.79	0.65
Curiosity and Creativity	1,459	3.70	0.71
Leadership/Responsibility	1,473	3.75	0.64
Confidence to Take Action	1,458	4.08	0.71

Parent Survey

A total of 1,955 parents responded to this survey—1,106 mothers and 849 fathers. However, due to missing data (skipped items), the number of respondents varies from item to item and is not reported. For the female respondents, 94% indicated they were either the mother or female guardian; other responses included step or foster mother and grandmother. For the male respondents, 88% indicated they were either the father or male guardian; other responses included step or foster father, grandfather, and friend of the child's mother.

Ten items related to their child in general. Parents were asked how many hours each day their child spent on homework for specific subjects; responses from mothers and fathers were very similar. About two thirds of the mothers and fathers estimated that their child spent a half hour per day each for English (67% mothers, 68% fathers), science (64% mothers, 66% fathers), math (59% mothers, 61% fathers), history/social studies (62% mothers, 65% fathers), and all other subjects combined (61% mothers, 63% fathers). Less than 20% of both groups said that their child spent no time for each of these subjects; a similar percentage indicated that their child spent one hour per day for each subject.

When parents were asked how often each week they helped their child with homework, about half of the mothers and fathers said they occasionally helped their child with English (48% mothers, 51% fathers), science (49% mothers, 54% fathers), math (45% mothers, 51% fathers), history/social studies (49% mothers, 54% fathers), and all other subjects (53% mothers, 57% fathers). A higher percentage of mothers indicated helping their child with homework in these subjects either frequently (about 25% compared to 15%) or every day (about 15% compared to 10%); further, a higher percentage of fathers responded that they never help with homework (about 20% compared to 10%).

Parents were then asked how hard they thought their child worked in school. Parent responses were very similar: 56% of both mothers and fathers indicated that their child works as hard as other students; 29% of mothers and 30% of fathers indicated that their child worked harder than other students (see Figure 10 for further details). Fifty-two percent of both mothers and fathers indicated their child was a good student; 25% of mothers and 27% of fathers indicated their child was an excellent student (see Figure 11 for more details).

More than three fourths of the parents (85%) reported that they have not talked with anyone at their child's school about the courses or grades needed to graduate from high school. About a third of both groups (32% mothers, 36% fathers) indicated they feel that they have enough information about high school graduation requirements.

Less than half of the mothers (41%) indicated that they frequently attend activities or events at their child's school, while only 28% of the fathers indicated that they attend the events frequently. However, nearly half of the mothers and fathers (40% each) responded that they occasionally attend activities.

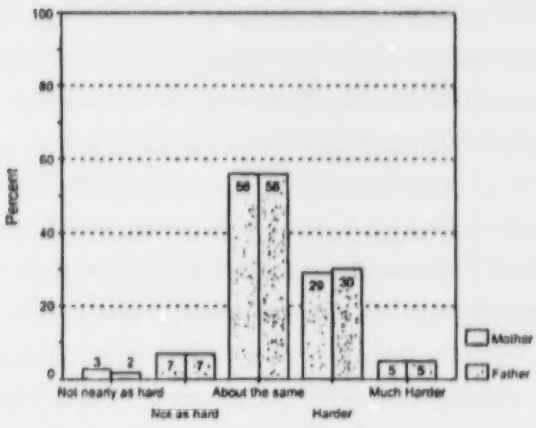

Figure 10: Parents' Perceptions of How Hard Their Child Works in School Compared to Other Students

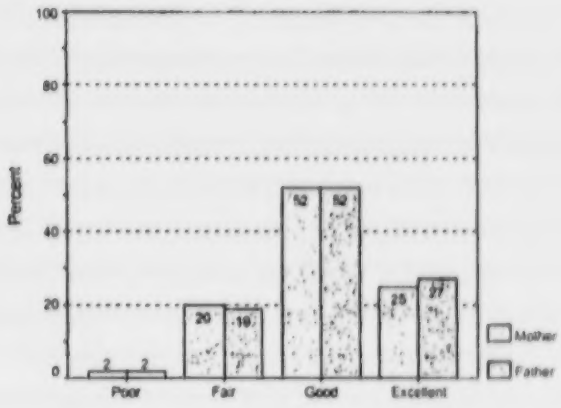

Figure 11: Parents' Perceptions of Their Child as a Student

More than half of the mothers (64%) and more than a third of the fathers (39%) reported that they occasionally or frequently meet with their child's teacher to discuss the academic progress of their child. Twenty-five percent of the mothers and 32% of the fathers indicated that they seldom meet with their child's teacher; only 11% of the mothers said they never meet with the teachers, compared to 28% of the fathers.

Parents were asked about their satisfaction with a series of topics regarding their child's experiences during the school year. Ninety-two percent of both the mothers and fathers were satisfied or very satisfied with their child's education; more than 90% indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the level of discipline maintained in the classroom by their child's teacher (92% mothers, 91% fathers). More than three fourths of both mothers and fathers were satisfied or very satisfied with each of the following: the school's approach towards college preparation (85% each), the respect that teachers and students have for each other (85% each), the level of discipline maintained in the school by the principal or assistant principal (88% each), and the school's encouragement of the family involvement (89% each).

Parents were asked to indicate which ways were helpful in learning about how their child was doing in school. Nearly all parents reported that report cards (97% mothers and fathers), parent/teacher conferences (92% mothers, 90% fathers), and talking to their child (90% mothers, 91% fathers) were helpful or very helpful. Further, more than three fourths indicated that homework sign-off (84% mothers, 83% fathers), phone calls from the teacher(s) (88% mothers, 85% fathers), and notes from the teacher(s) (90% mothers, 88% fathers) were helpful or very helpful.

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Three items related to their child's future plans. Almost half of the mothers (43%) and fathers (44%) indicated they would like their child to obtain an advanced degree. About a third of both groups (32% mothers, 30% fathers) indicated they hoped that their child would go on to obtain a bachelor degree, followed by high school graduation (10% and 12%) and a associate degree (10% and 9%) (see Figure 12 for further details). When asked who provided their child with information about options for continuing education after high school, more than three fourths (85% mothers, 86% fathers) reported that they provided that particular information. Both groups indicated that teachers, grandparents, guidance counselors, siblings, and other family members also provided that information. See Figure 13 for percentages of the most frequent providers of such information.

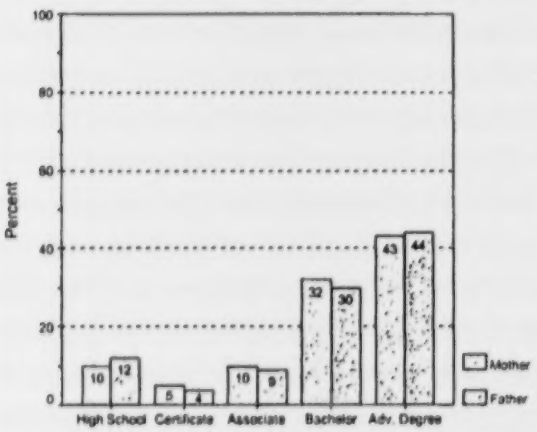

Figure 12: Parents' Academic Expectations for Their Child

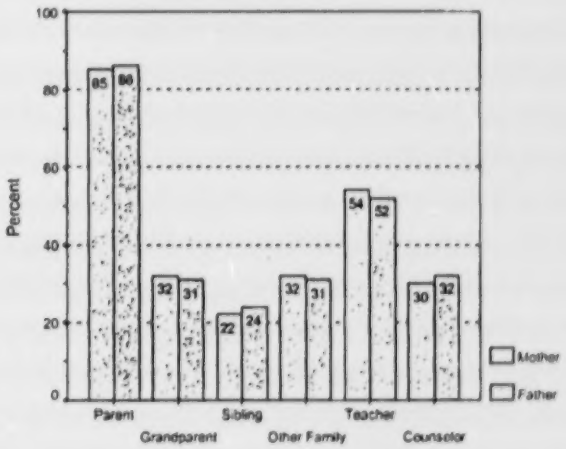

Figure 13: Parents' Perceptions of People Who Provide Educational Information to Their Child

Parents were asked what the main reason would be for their child not continuing his/her education after high school. About a third (34% mothers, 35% fathers) indicated that there was no reason; their child definitely would go. However, 28% of the parents reported that it cost too much, while 12% and 14%, respectively, indicated that they did not know.

Eight items related to parents' knowledge about college. Nearly all the parents indicated that they have not talked with anyone at their child's school about the courses and grades needed to get into college (91% mothers, 90% fathers). Nearly a third of the mothers and fathers indicated they were aware of the entrance requirements for the three basic types of postsecondary schools—two-year or community college; four-year college or university; and vocational, trade, or business school (see Figure 14 for further details). When parents were asked if they had talked to their child about attending college, 90% of the mothers and 85% of the fathers responded positively.

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About a third of the parents reported that they have started saving money for their child's college education (34% mothers, 36% fathers). Parents were asked to estimate the one-year tuition expense for their child to attend a four-year public college in their state. The actual average cost of tuition at a four-year public college in West Virginia is $2,548; the national average is $3,506 (Snyder & Hoffman, 2001). Nearly a third indicated they estimated the cost to be $5,001 to $10,000 (27% mothers, 31% fathers). Twenty-two percent of the mothers and 19% of the fathers estimated the cost to be $10,001 to $15,000. Less than 20% of the parents (16% mothers, 17% fathers) indicated that they estimated the cost to be $1,001 to $5,000, which included the state and national average (see Figure 15 for further details).

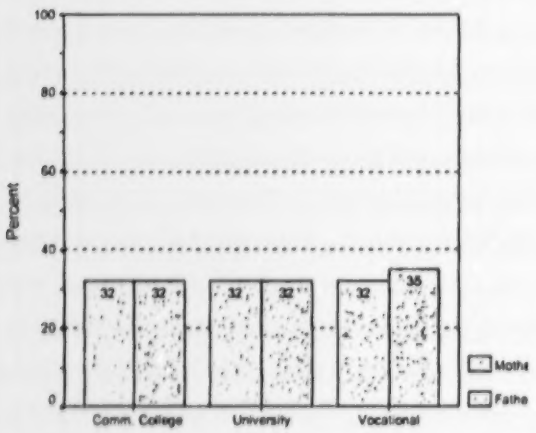

Figure 14: Parents' Awareness of Entrance Requirements for Postsecondary Schools

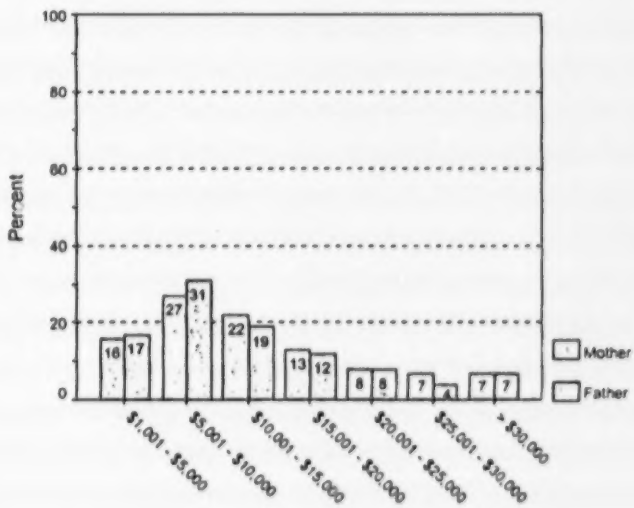

Figure 15: Parents' Estimate of Yearly Tuition for an In-State Four-Year Public College

Parents were then asked if they thought that their child would be able to afford to attend a public four-year college or university. Almost half (44% mothers, 45% fathers) indicated that they were not sure; about a third (28% mothers, 31% fathers) reported that their child probably or definitely would be able to afford to attend a public four-year college or university (see Figure 16 for further details).

Parents were asked if they had heard of the different financial aid sources that were available for education beyond high school. Both groups indicated that they were most aware of federal student loans (77% mothers, 73% fathers) and athletic scholarships (68% mothers, 66% fathers). More than half reported that they were familiar with federal Pell grants (59% mothers, 51% fathers) and state scholarships (58% mothers, 54% fathers). See Figure 17 for further details of parents' awareness of financial aid. Parents were then asked if they thought their child would qualify for

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enough of the above sources of financial assistance to attend college. A majority of both parents (70% mothers, 68% fathers) indicated that their child would likely qualify.

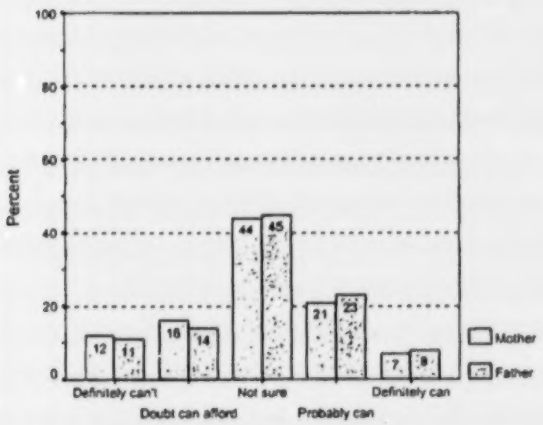

Figure 16: Parents' Perceptions of Child's Ability to Afford Postsecondary Education

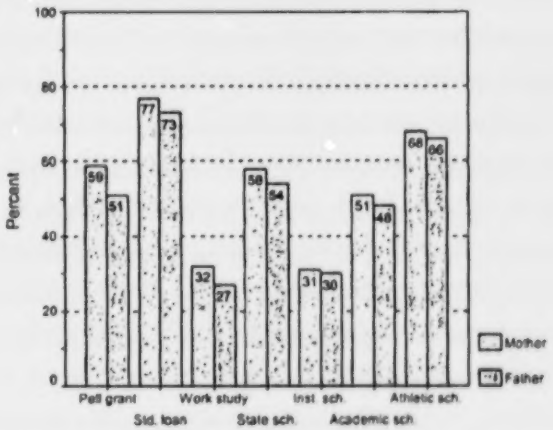

Figure 17: Parents' Awareness of Financial Aid Sources

Eight items related to parents' background. Forty-eight percent of both groups indicated their highest level of education was high school, followed by less than high school (19% mothers, 26% fathers). Eighty-six percent of the mothers indicated that another adult lived in their home; 92% of the fathers indicated the same. Fourteen percent of both groups reported that someone living in their home was currently attending college.

Parents were asked if they used a computer in their home. Nearly two thirds of both groups (63% mothers, 60% fathers) reported that a computer was used in the home.

When asked what the total yearly income was of all persons in their household, responses were similar between parent groups. Twenty percent of the mothers indicated $10,001 to $20,000, as did 18% of the fathers. Twenty-one percent of the fathers reported $20,001 to $30,000, as did 18% of the mothers. Eighteen percent of both groups indicated a total income of $30,001 to $40,000. Less than a third of both groups reported having a total income of more than $40,001 (26% mothers, 30% fathers).

When parents were asked to describe themselves, nearly all (98% mothers, 97% fathers) indicated they were White. One percent of each group selected American Indian or Alaska Native, and 1% of the mothers selected Black or African American.

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Parents were given a list of various free workshops and were asked which ones they would more likely attend if they were offered at a convenient time with free transportation. More than a third indicated interest in computers and financial aid/scholarships, followed by dealing with teens and college preparation. For each of the various topics, the mothers' responses were higher than those for the fathers. Neither group showed as much interest in academic workshops. See Figure 18 for a graphical depiction of the six workshops of most interest to both mothers and fathers.

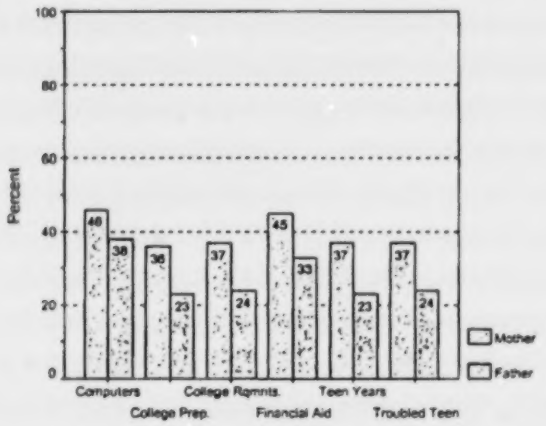

Figure 18: Six Workshop Topics of Most Interest to Parents

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CONCLUSIONS

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the West Virginia Department of Education regional GEAR UP data for West Virginia seventh-grade students and their parents. These conclusions are presented below by topical themes.

Academics

- Homework seems to be fairly heavy for the majority of students. About half of the parents and students report that students spend about two and a half hours per day on homework. This estimate may be slightly inflated since a half hour is the smallest increment a student could choose other than "never" in the response options for each of the five subjects.

- Overall, students seem to have a positive view of their academic abilities and of the effort they put into their studies. More than three fourths view themselves as good or excellent students. Further, nearly two thirds believe they work as hard as other students and about a third report that they work harder or much harder. Parents have a similar perception of the effort their child puts into education. About a third perceive that their child works harder or much harder than other children and approximately half believe their child works about the same; about three fourths believe that their child is either an excellent or good student.

- In general, students believe that they have good study skills and report doing well in English, math, science, and history. For those not doing well, their most frequent explanations are that they have a grade of C or D, that they don't do well on tests, that the subject is boring, or that they don't like the subject.

- About a third of the students believe they do need help with math; about a fourth with science, social studies, and English. However, students do not seem very open to the idea of tutoring, with only 20% expressing interest in after-school tutoring and less than two thirds expressing interest in a mentoring system.

- The majority of students seem to be technologically literate. Nearly three fourths report having used a computer for school projects and more than two thirds that they have already taken a computer class at school. Further, nearly three fourths report using a computer at home; about half have Internet access. Fewer parents (less than two thirds) report using a home computer.

Parent Involvement

- Family members seem to play a critical role in helping students understand and complete homework tasks. The majority of students report that they first look to a parent for such help and also frequently consult with a friend, a teacher, or some other family member. Parents do not seem to place as much value on their contribution to their child's homework. About a third of the parents report helping their child frequently or every day, with mothers helping more than fathers.

- Despite parents' satisfaction with the amount of family involvement encouraged by the school, their participation in school-based activities seems to be limited in scope. About two thirds of the mothers and one third of the fathers report that they occasionally or frequently meet with their child's teachers. However, nearly three times as many of the fathers report never meeting with a teacher (28% compared to 11%). About three fourths of the parents report they occasionally or frequently attend activities at their child's school.

- Parents seem pleased with their child's educational experiences for this school year. At least 85% indicate satisfaction with education in general, college preparation, discipline, respect, and family involvement. Further, more than 80% find that conferences, homework sign-off, report cards, talking to their child, and phone calls or notes from the teacher help them stay informed of their child's progress.

- Mothers are consistently more interested than fathers in attending free educational workshops. More than a third of the mothers are interested in topics such as computers, college preparation or requirements, financial aid, and child rearing, compared to only about a fourth of the fathers.

Student Aspirations

- Students report being well supported in the areas of confidence to take action and sense of accomplishment. They report feeling less well supported in fun and excitement and belonging. In other words, while students report feeling fairly confident and successful about their learning, they do not seem to view their learning as particularly interesting or exciting and do not feel that teachers particularly value their thoughts or feelings.

- Overall, student and parent aspirations are high for the student's postsecondary education. About two thirds of the students believe that they will obtain either a bachelor or advanced degree and also believe their parents want them to get a bachelor or advanced degree. A higher number of parents (about three fourths) report wanting their child to obtain either degree.

College Awareness and Preparation

- Overall, students seem to be at least superficially considering the prospect of college. Nearly all the students believe that they have the ability to go to college and believe that college graduates earn more money than those without a college degree. About three fourths perceive college as very important and indicate that they do want to attend a postsecondary institution. About two thirds believe they need more education to obtain a satisfying job; three fourths that continuing their education might help them make career decisions. Further, students most frequently mentioned occupations that require at least an undergraduate education (i.e., athlete, veterinarian, doctor, lawyer, nurse).

- Students' awareness of the various types of postsecondary institutions is fairly high. More than three fourths are aware of four-year colleges, and about two thirds know about two-year colleges or vocational schools. Yet, while about half of the students report having discussed college requirements with an adult at home, less than a fourth have talked with a school counselor. Similarly, most parents report they have discussed college options with their child, but have not had discussions with school personnel about required courses and grades.

- Students do not seem to have a real understanding of what is required of them now to begin preparing for college. Only about half know which courses are needed to adequately prepare them and report that they plan to take such academically challenging courses as chemistry, algebra, or a foreign language. Only a third plan to take physics, and less than a fourth plan to take calculus or trigonometry.

- Students view parents and teachers as their best sources of information about academic choices and most value their input to educational decision making. However, only about a third of the parents are familiar with college entrance requirements and believe they have enough information about high school graduation requirements.

- There seems to be a wide range in parents' awareness of financial aid options for postsecondary education. Between a fourth to three fourths of the parents are aware of the various types of available financial aid, and nearly three fourths believe their child will qualify for such aid. Further, only about half of the students and less than a third of the parents believe that the students probably or definitely will be able to afford college.

- Very few of the students and parents seem to have a realistic estimate of the tuition expense for one year at a four-year, in-state public college. Less than a fourth of both groups selected the expense range that included the state and national average tuition expenses ($2,548 and $3,506 respectively).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The GEAR UP project can make a substantial difference in students' lives by working to alleviate some of the educational and social problems within the state. Based on the findings and conclusions presented in this report, the following recommendations are made to West Virginia Department of Education GEAR UP staff in the interest of increasing students' and parents' awareness of and interest in postsecondary education for the eight-county region served by the project.

- Encourage student participation in tutoring and mentoring programs, especially in math.
- Emphasize the importance of college-preparatory courses and encourage students to plan on taking such courses, especially physics, calculus, and trigonometry.
- Help all students understand that college is a viable option for them and provide information about degree requirements for various career choices.
- Provide students and parents with information about and entrance requirements for both two- and four-year colleges, as well as for vocational and business schools.
- Provide students and parents with information about and requirements for various financial aid sources for financing postsecondary education.
- Work to find ways to increase parents' involvement in the academic lives of their children, beyond occasionally meeting with teachers or attending school activities.
- Establish a schedule of educational workshops for parents on the topics of computers, college preparation or requirements, financial aid, and child-rearing.
- Work to find ways to make learning more interesting and exciting for students.
- Work to find ways of increasing students' sense of belonging in the school community.
- In terms of improving data collection for the next year's survey of seventh graders, two suggestions are offered. Staff may want to consider again revising the parent and student survey items dealing with the amount of time a child spends on homework. The items could be changed to reflect weekly amounts of time per subject spent on homework or 15-minute increments could be added to the daily time estimates. Either revision would provide respondents with options that more accurately reflect the amount of time that students spend per subject on homework.

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APPENDIXES

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Appendix A:
Completed SEDCAR Standards Checklist

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AEL SEDCAR Standards Checklist

The *Standards for Educational Data Collection and Reporting* (1991) were used in the development of this (check one):

- ☐ Study group report
- ☐ Field test report
- ☐ Minigrant final report
- ☐ Implementation report
- ☒ Research report
- ☐ Impact study report
- ☐ Other _____

The SEDCAR Standards were consulted and used as indicated in the table below (check or mark as appropriate):

SEDCAR Standard Number and Descriptor	The Standard was deemed applicable; and, to the extent feasible, was taken into account.*	The Standard was deemed applicable; but could not be taken into account.	The Standard was not deemed applicable.	Exception was taken to the Standard.
1.1 Creating an Infrastructure to Manage Data Collection Activities	X			
1.2 Justifying Data Collection Activities	X			
1.3 Fostering Commitment of all Participants	X			
1.4 Creating an Appropriate Management Process	X			
2.1 Formulating and Refining Study Questions	X			
2.2 Choosing the Data Collection Methods	X			
2.3 Developing a Sampling Plan			X	
2.4 Assessing the Value of Obtainable Data	X			
2.5 Transforming Study Question Concepts into Measures	X			
2.6 Designing the Data Collection Instrument	X			
2.7 Minimizing Total Study Error (Sampling and Nonsampling)	X			
2.8 Reviewing and Pretesting Data Collection Instruments, Forms, and Procedures	X			
2.9 Preparing a Written Design	X			
3.1 Preparing for Data Collection	X			
3.2 Selecting and Training Data Collection Staff			X	
3.3 Ethical Treatment of Data Providers	X			
3.4 Minimizing Burden and Nonresponse	X			
3.5 Implementing Data Collection Quality Control Procedures	X			

*Four column headings from Evaluation *Standards*.

SEDCAR Standard Number and Descriptor	The Standard was deemed applicable; and, to the extent feasible, was taken into account.*	The Standard was deemed applicable; but could not be taken into account.	The Standard was not deemed applicable.	Exception was taken to the Standard.
3.6 Documenting Data Collections	X			
4.1 Planning Systems Requirements	X			
4.2 Designing Data Processing Systems	X			
4.3 Developing Data Processing Systems	X			
4.4 Testing Data Processing Systems	X			
4.5 Planning for Data Preparation	X			
4.6 Preparing Data for Processing and Analysis	X			
4.7 Maintaining Programs and Data Files	X			
4.8 Documenting Data Processing Activities	X			
4.9 Evaluating Data Processing Systems	X			
5.1 Preparing an Analysis Plan	X			
5.2 Developing Analysis Variables	X			
5.3 Applying Appropriate Weights			X	
5.4 Estimating Sampling and Nonsampling Errors			X	
5.5 Determining Statistical Significance			X	
6.1 Presenting Findings	X			
6.2 Reviewing the Report	X			
6.3 Releasing Data	X			
6.4 Disseminating Data	X			
6.5 Preparing Documentation and Technical Reports	X			

Name: Kimberly S. Cowley (typed) Date: May 13, 2002

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Appendix B:
Regional Summary by Survey

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Regional: April 2002 (N = 1,106)
Mothers

West Virginia
State GEAR UP Grant:

2001-2002
Parent Survey

Please respond to all items by completely filling in the circle for each selected response.

Like this: O Not this: O O

Identification Code:

Student Social Security No. Co. Sch.

General Information

1. What is your relationship to the seventh-grade child who brought this survey home?

MALE RESPONDENTS:		FEMALE RESPONDENTS:	
0%	Father or male guardian	94%	Mother or female guardian
0%	Step or foster father	2%	Step or foster mother
0%	Grandfather	3%	Grandmother
0%	Friend of child's mother	0%	Friend of child's father
0%	Other male	0%	Other female

Your Child

2. For each of the following subjects, about how many hours each day does your child spend on homework?

		0	*½*	*1*	*1½*	*2*	*2½*	*3*	*Not Taking*
a.	English	13%	67%	14%	2%	1%	0%	0%	3%
b.	Science	16%	64%	14%	2%	0%	0%	0%	3%
c.	Math	7%	59%	26%	5%	2%	1%	0%	1%
d.	History/Social Studies	14%	62%	17%	3%	1%	0%	0%	3%
e.	All other subjects	17%	61%	14%	3%	2%	0%	0%	1%

3. For each of the following subjects, about how often each week do you help your child with homework?

		Never	*Occa-sionally*	*Fre-quently*	*Every Day*	*Not Taking*
a.	English	11%	48%	22%	16%	3%
b.	Science	12%	49%	22%	15%	2%
c.	Math	10%	45%	27%	18%	1%
d.	History/Social Studies	11%	49%	23%	15%	3%
e.	All other subjects	11%	53%	20%	15%	1%

4. Compared with other students, how hard do you think your child works in school?

3%	Not nearly as hard	29%	Harder
7%	Not as hard	5%	Much harder
56%	About the same		

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5. What type of student is your child? (Consider academic performance and study habits).

2%	Poor	52%	Good
20%	Fair	25%	Excellent

	Yes	*No*
6. Have you talked with anyone at your child's school about the courses or grades needed to graduate from high school?	15%	85%
7. Do you feel you have enough information about high school graduation requirements?	32%	68%

	Never	*Seldom*	*Occa-sionally*	*Fre-quently*
8. How often do you attend activities or events at your child's school?	5%	14%	40%	41%
9. How often do you meet with your child's teachers to discuss the academic progress of your child?	11%	25%	50%	14%

10. How satisfied are you regarding your child's experiences this year with each of the following:	*Very Dissat.*	*Dissat-isfied*	*Satisfied*	*Very Satisfied*
a. His/her education	1%	6%	80%	12%
b. School's approach towards college preparation	2%	13%	75%	10%
c. The level of discipline maintained in the classroom by your child's teacher	2%	7%	81%	11%
d. The respect that teachers and students have for each other	3%	13%	75%	10%
e. The level of discipline maintained in the school by the principal or assistant principal	3%	8%	76%	12%
f. The school's encouragement of family involvement	2%	9%	74%	15%

11. How helpful are each of the following ways of learning about how your child is doing in school:	*Not Help-ful at All*	*Not too Helpful*	*Helpful*	*Very Helpful*
a. Parent/teacher conferences	2%	7%	59%	33%
b. Homework sign-off	4%	12%	62%	22%
c. Report cards	0%	3%	50%	47%
d. Talking to my child	1%	9%	50%	40%
e. Phone calls from teacher(s)	5%	7%	57%	31%
f. Notes from teacher(s)	5%	5%	54%	36%

Your Child's Future Plans

12. How far in school would you like to see your child go?

0%	Less than high school graduation	10%	Associate degree (2-yr. pgm., A.A., A.S.)
10%	High school graduation	32%	Bachelor degree (4-yr. pgm., B.A., B.S.)
5%	Certificate program (less than 2-yr. pgm.)	43%	Advanced degree (master, doctorate)

13. Who provides your child with information about options for continuing education after high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

85%	Parent or guardian	54%	Teacher
32%	Grandparent	30%	Guidance counselor
22%	Brother or sister	16%	Principal or assistant principal
32%	Other family member	7%	Coach
19%	Friend	15%	GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)
9%	Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi)	8%	Some other person

14. What would be the main reason for your child not continuing his/her education after high school?

34%	No reason, child definitely will go	2%	Child wants to join the military
28%	It costs too much or cannot afford it	0%	College is too far from home
1%	College not necessary for planned job	2%	Child doesn't like school
2%	Grades are not good enough	0%	Child wants to start a family
5%	Child is just not interested	2%	Some other reason
0%	Child wants or needs to work	12%	Don't know
11%	Multiple Response		

Knowledge about College

		Yes	*No*
15.	Have you talked with anyone at your child's school about the courses and grades needed to get into college?	9%	91%
16.	Are you familiar with the entrance requirements for the three basic types of postsecondary schools?		
	a. Two-year or community college	32%	68%
	b. Four-year college or university	32%	68%
	c. Vocational, trade, or business school	32%	68%
17.	Have you talked with your child about attending college?	90%	10%
18.	Have you started saving any money for your child's college education?	34%	66%

19. How much do you think it costs for one year of tuition at a four-year public college in your state?

1%	Up to $1,000	13%	$15,001 - $20,000
16%	$1,001 - $5,000	8%	$20,001 - $25,000
27%	$5,001 - $10,000	7%	$25,001 - $30,000
22%	$10,001 - $15,000	7%	More than $30,000

20. Do you think your child would be able to afford to attend a public four-year college or university?

12%	Definitely can't afford it	21%	Probably can afford it
16%	Doubt if can afford it	7%	Definitely will be able to afford it
44%	Not sure		

21. Have you heard of the following sources of money for education beyond high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

59%	Federal Pell grants	31%	Institutional scholarships
77%	Federal student loans	51%	Private or academic scholarships
32%	Federal work-study	68%	Athletic scholarships
58%	State scholarships		

	Yes	*No*
22. Do you think your child is likely to qualify for enough of the above sources of financial assistance to attend college?	70%	30%

Background

	Male	*Female*
23. What is your gender?	0%	100%

24. What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

19%	Less than high school	8%	Associate degree (2-yr. pgm., A.A., A.S.)
48%	Completed high school	6%	Bachelor degree (4-yr. pgm., B.A., B.S.)
15%	Certificate (less than 2-yr. pgm.)	4%	Advanced degree (master or doctorate)

	Yes	*No*
25. Are there any other adults in your household?	86%	14%
26. Is anyone in your household currently attending college?	14%	86%
27. Do you use a computer at home?	63%	37%

28. What is the total yearly income of all persons in your household? (Include salaries, interest, retirement, and public assistance for all household members.)

19%	$10,000 or less	18%	$30,001 to $40,000
20%	$10,001 to $20,000	10%	$40,001 to $50,000
18%	$20,001 to $30,000	16%	More than $50,000

29. How do you describe yourself?

1%	American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
0%	Asian	98%	White
1%	Black or African American	0%	Biracial
0%	Hispanic or Latino	0%	Multiracial

30. Which of the following free workshops would you attend if they were offered at a convenient time, with free transportation? *(Select all that apply.)*

46%	Understanding Computers/Internet	36%	Preparing for College - A Parent's Course
30%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Math	37%	Understanding College Requirements
16%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in English	45%	Understanding Financial Aid/Scholarships
11%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Spelling	12%	Preparing to Take the GED
12%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Writing	37%	Understanding the Teenage Years
10%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Speaking	37%	How to Know the Signs of a Troubled Teen

Regional: April 2002 (N = 849)
Fathers

West Virginia
State GEAR UP Grant:

2001-2002
Parent Survey

Please respond to all items by completely filling in the circle for each selected response.

Like this: O Not this: O O

Identification Code:

Student Social Security No. Co. Sch.

General Information

1. What is your relationship to the seventh-grade child who brought this survey home?

MALE RESPONDENTS:		FEMALE RESPONDENTS:	
88%	Father or male guardian	0%	Mother or female guardian
9%	Step or foster father	0%	Step or foster mother
2%	Grandfather	0%	Grandmother
1%	Friend of child's mother	0%	Friend of child's father
0%	Other male	0%	Other female

Your Child

2. For each of the following subjects, about how many hours each day does your child spend on homework?

	0	*½*	*1*	*1½*	*2*	*2½*	*3*	*Not Taking*
a. English	14%	68%	13%	2%	1%	0%	0%	3%
b. Science	15%	66%	12%	2%	0%	0%	0%	3%
c. Math	6%	61%	24%	6%	1%	1%	0%	1%
d. History/Social Studies	14%	65%	13%	3%	1%	0%	0%	3%
e. All other subjects	16%	63%	13%	3%	2%	0%	0%	2%

3. For each of the following subjects, about how often each week do you help your child with homework?

	Never	*Occa-sionally*	*Fre-quently*	*Every Day*	*Not Taking*
a. English	22%	51%	14%	10%	3%
b. Science	19%	54%	16%	9%	3%
c. Math	14%	51%	21%	13%	1%
d. History/Social Studies	19%	54%	15%	10%	2%
e. All other subjects	19%	57%	13%	9%	1%

4. Compared with other students, how hard do you think your child works in school?

2%	Not nearly as hard	30%	Harder
7%	Not as hard	5%	Much harder
56%	About the same		

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5. What type of student is your child? (Consider academic performance and study habits).

2%	Poor	52%	Good
19%	Fair	27%	Excellent

	Yes	*No*
6. Have you talked with anyone at your child's school about the courses or grades needed to graduate from high school?	15%	85%
7. Do you feel you have enough information about high school graduation requirements?	36%	64%

	Never	*Seldom*	*Occa-sionally*	*Fre-quently*
8. How often do you attend activities or events at your child's school?	12%	20%	40%	28%
9. How often do you meet with your child's teachers to discuss the academic progress of your child?	28%	32%	32%	7%

10. How satisfied are you regarding your child's experiences this year with each of the following:	*Very Dissat.*	*Dissat-isfied*	*Satisfied*	*Very Satisfied*
a. His/her education	1%	6%	82%	10%
b. School's approach towards college preparation	2%	13%	78%	7%
c. The level of discipline maintained in the classroom by your child's teacher	2%	7%	82%	9%
d. The respect that teachers and students have for each other	2%	13%	75%	10%
e. The level of discipline maintained in the school by the principal or assistant principal	2%	10%	76%	12%
f. The school's encouragement of family involvement	2%	10%	76%	13%

11. How helpful are each of the following ways of learning about how your child is doing in school:	*Not Help-ful at All*	*Not too Helpful*	*Helpful*	*Very Helpful*
a. Parent/teacher conferences	3%	7%	64%	26%
b. Homework sign-off	4%	13%	63%	20%
c. Report cards	1%	3%	54%	43%
d. Talking to my child	1%	8%	54%	37%
e. Phone calls from teacher(s)	6%	9%	59%	26%
f. Notes from teacher(s)	4%	7%	56%	32%

Your Child's Future Plans

12. How far in school would you like to see your child go?

0%	Less than high school graduation	9%	Associate degree (2-yr. pgm., A.A., A.S.)
12%	High school graduation	30%	Bachelor degree (4-yr. pgm., B.A., B.S.)
4%	Certificate program (less than 2-yr. pgm.)	44%	Advanced degree (master, doctorate)

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24%	Brother or sister	19%	Principal or assistant principal
31%	Other family member	10%	Coach
20%	Friend	14%	GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)
8%	Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi)	7%	Some other person

14. What would be the main reason for your child not continuing his/her education after high school?

35%	No reason, child definitely will go	2%	Child wants to join the military
28%	It costs too much or cannot afford it	0%	College is too far from home
1%	College not necessary for planned job	2%	Child doesn't like school
2%	Grades are not good enough	0%	Child wants to start a family
5%	Child is just not interested	2%	Some other reason
0%	Child wants or needs to work	14%	Don't know
9%	Multiple Response		

Knowledge about College

		Yes	*No*
15.	Have you talked with anyone at your child's school about the courses and grades needed to get into college?	10%	90%
16.	Are you familiar with the entrance requirements for the three basic types of postsecondary schools?		
	a. Two-year or community college	32%	68%
	b. Four-year college or university	32%	68%
	c. Vocational, trade, or business school	35%	65%
17.	Have you talked with your child about attending college?	85%	15%
18.	Have you started saving any money for your child's college education?	36%	64%

19. How much do you think it costs for one year of tuition at a four-year public college in your state?

1%	Up to $1,000	12%	$15,001 - $20,000
17%	$1,001 - $5,000	8%	$20,001 - $25,000
31%	$5,001 - $10,000	4%	$25,001 - $30,000
19%	$10,001 - $15,000	7%	More than $30,000

20. Do you think your child would be able to afford to attend a public four-year college or university?

11%	Definitely can't afford it	23%	Probably can afford it
14%	Doubt if can afford it	8%	Definitely will be able to afford it
45%	Not sure		

21. Have you heard of the following sources of money for education beyond high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

51%	Federal Pell grants	30%	Institutional scholarships
73%	Federal student loans	48%	Private or academic scholarships
27%	Federal work-study	66%	Athletic scholarships
54%	State scholarships		

		Yes	*No*
22.	Do you think your child is likely to qualify for enough of the above sources of financial assistance to attend college?	68%	32%

Background

		Male	*Female*
23.	What is your gender?	100%	0%

24. What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

26%	Less than high school	5%	Associate degree (2-yr. pgm., A.A., A.S.)
48%	Completed high school	5%	Bachelor degree (4-yr. pgm., B.A., B.S.)
12%	Certificate (less than 2-yr. pgm.)	5%	Advanced degree (master or doctorate)

		Yes	*No*
25.	Are there any other adults in your household?	92%	8%
26.	Is anyone in your household currently attending college?	14%	86%
27.	Do you use a computer at home?	60%	40%

28. What is the total yearly income of all persons in your household? (Include salaries, interest, retirement, and public assistance for all household members.)

13%	$10,000 or less	18%	$30,001 to $40,000
18%	$10,001 to $20,000	12%	$40,001 to $50,000
21%	$20,001 to $30,000	18%	More than $50,000

29. How do you describe yourself?

1%	American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
0%	Asian	97%	White
0%	Black or African American	0%	Biracial
0%	Hispanic or Latino	0%	Multiracial

30. Which of the following free workshops would you attend if they were offered at a convenient time, with free transportation? *(Select all that apply.)*

38%	Understanding Computers/Internet	23%	Preparing for College - A Parent's Course
20%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Math	24%	Understanding College Requirements
10%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in English	33%	Understanding Financial Aid/Scholarships
9%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Spelling	9%	Preparing to Take the GED
8%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Writing	23%	Understanding the Teenage Years
7%	Brush-Up Course for Parents in Speaking	24%	How to Know the Signs of a Troubled Teen

Region: April 2002 (N = 1,520)

West Virginia
State GEAR UP Grant:

2001-2002
7th Grade Student Survey

Please respond to all items by completely filling in the circle for each selected response.

Like this: O Not like this: O O

Identification Code:

Student Social Security No. Co. Sch.

School and School Work

1. Who usually helps you with your homework? *(Select all that apply.)*

84%	Parent or guardian	28%	Friend
16%	Grandparent	17%	Teacher
26%	Brother or sister	1%	GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)
15%	Other family member	4%	Some other person

2. Compared with other students, how hard do you think you work in school?

2%	Not nearly as hard	24%	Harder
6%	Not as hard	6%	Much harder
61%	About the same		

3. What type of student do you consider yourself to be?

2%	Poor	63%	Good
21%	Fair	14%	Excellent

4. How important to you is what each of the following people think you should do about your education?		*Not Impt.*	*Some Impt.*	*Very Impt.*
a.	Parent or guardian	1%	9%	90%
b.	Grandparent	6%	27%	67%
c.	Brother or sister	25%	41%	34%
d.	Other family member	11%	42%	47%
e.	Friend	20%	52%	28%
f.	Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi)	30%	32%	38%
g.	Teacher	5%	21%	74%
h.	Guidance counselor	18%	33%	49%
i.	Principal or assistant principal	11%	29%	60%
j.	Coach	23%	34%	43%
k.	GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)	24%	30%	45%
l.	Some other person	40%	36%	24%

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5. I am doing well (a grade of A or B) in each of these subjects:

		Yes	*No*	*Not Taking*
a.	English	81%	13%	6%
b.	History	70%	17%	13%
c.	Math	78%	19%	3%
d.	Science	80%	15%	5%

6. If you are not doing well in a particular subject, why not?
(Select all that apply for each subject.)

	Eng.	*His.*	*Math*	*Science*
Have a C or D	16%	17%	21%	13%
Subject is too hard	8%	12%	15%	8%
Subject is boring	14%	18%	11%	10%
Don't do well on tests	11%	12%	16%	14%
Don't do all the assignments	7%	8%	8%	7%
Don't like the teacher	7%	8%	9%	6%
Don't understand the subject	8%	9%	11%	8%
Don't like the subject	11%	11%	12%	8%
Don't pay enough attention in class	7%	8%	7%	6%
Don't study hard enough	8%	8%	9%	8%
Other	4%	6%	6%	5%
Don't Know	7%	8%	7%	7%

7. Which subjects do you think you need help with? *(Select all that apply.)*

20%	English	20%	Science
18%	History	20%	Social Studies
32%	Math	21%	Spelling
17%	Reading	10%	Other

8. What is your favorite subject in school?

14%	Art	4%	Reading
6%	Band	12%	Science
5%	English	3%	Social Studies
3%	History	3%	Spelling
18%	Math	14%	Other
		18%	Multiple Response

9. What makes that subject your favorite? *(Select all that apply.)*

48%	It's fun or cool	38%	I like the activities
39%	It's easy to understand	21%	It's challenging
39%	I like the teacher	41%	I like the subject
51%	I am good at it	13%	Other

10. Which of the following courses do you plan on taking in high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

52%	Algebra	60%	Foreign Language
20%	Calculus	33%	Physics
49%	Chemistry	22%	Trigonometry

11. For each of the following subjects, about how many hours <u>each day</u> do you spend on homework?

		0	½	1	1½	2	2½	3	Not Taking
a.	English	18%	55%	15%	4%	1%	1%	1%	5%
b.	Science	20%	48%	18%	4%	2%	1%	1%	5%
c.	Math	11%	47%	25%	8%	4%	2%	2%	2%
d.	History/Social Studies	18%	47%	17%	7%	3%	1%	2%	5%
e.	All other subjects combined	13%	30%	20%	13%	8%	5%	6%	4%

		Yes	No
12.	I think I have good study skills.	76%	24%
13.	I would be interested in attending an after-school tutoring program.	20%	80%
14.	I think I have the ability to go to college.	87%	13%
15.	In school, I participate in sports.	61%	39%
16.	In school, I participate in clubs.	30%	70%
17.	In school, I participate in student government.	18%	82%
18.	I use a computer for school projects.	71%	29%
19.	I have taken a computer class at school.	68%	32%
20.	I use a computer at home.	72%	28%
21.	If you have a computer at home, do you have Internet access?	58%	42%
22.	I plan to be living in West Virginia when I'm 30.	46%	54%
23.	I plan to be working in West Virginia when I'm 30.	40%	60%
24.	I would be interested in having a "college-type" mentor or buddy.	59%	41%

Knowledge about College

		Yes	No
25.	Have you ever talked with your school counselor or someone else at your school about the entrance requirements for college?	22%	78%
26.	Do you have an idea of what courses you should take in high school to prepare you for college?	58%	42%

27. Have you heard of the following types of schools?

		Yes	No
a.	Two-year or community college	61%	39%
b.	Four-year college or university	79%	21%
c.	Vocational, trade, or business school	66%	34%

28.	Do you think a person with a college degree typically earns more money in one year than a person who does not have a college degree?	83%	17%

29. How much do you think it costs for one year of tuition at a four-year public college in your state?

7%	Up to $1,000	13%	$15,001 - $20,000
16%	$1,001 - $5,000	9%	$20,001 - $25,000
19%	$5,001 - $10,000	9%	$25,001 - $30,000
18%	$10,001 - $15,000	9%	More than $30,000

30. How important to your future is getting an education beyond high school?

8%	Don't know	12%	Some important
3%	Not important	77%	Very important

Plans for the Future

31. What do you want to be when you grow up?

1%	Actor/actress	5%	Doctor	0%	Pilot
1%	Architect	1%	Engineer	2%	Police officer
1%	Artist	4%	Lawyer	1%	Race-car driver
7%	Athlete (any sport)	2%	Mechanic	1%	Scientist
0%	Astronaut	2%	Military	2%	Singer/musician
2%	Beautician	1%	Model	2%	Teacher
0%	Chef	4%	Nurse	3%	Truck driver
2%	Computer/video technician	1%	Pharmacist	6%	Veterinarian
1%	Construction worker	1%	Photographer	10%	Other Career
1%	Designer/decorator	0%	Physical therapist	10%	Don't Know
25%	Multiple Response				

	Yes	*No*
32. Do you think you will continue your education after high school (that is, go to college or attend a trade school, etc.)?	87%	13%
33. Before entering the seventh grade, had you ever heard of GEAR UP?	37%	63%

34. From whom do you get most of your information about your options for continuing your education after high school? *(Select all that apply.)*

80%	Parent or guardian	42%	Teacher
29%	Grandparent	10%	Guidance counselor
20%	Brother or sister	12%	Principal or assistant principal
26%	Other family member	8%	Coach
19%	Friend	6%	GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)
5%	Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi)	14%	Some other person

35. How far in school do you think you will get?

2%	Less than high school graduation	11%	Associate degree (2-yr pgm., AA, AS)
20%	High school graduation	28%	Bachelor degree (4-yr pgm., BA, BS)
4%	Certificate program (less than 2-yr pgm.)	33%	Advanced degree (master, doctorate)

36. What is the main reason you would not continue your education after high school?

47%	No reason, I definitely will go	4%	I want to join the military
9%	It costs too much or I can't afford it	2%	Don't want to be away from home
1%	Don't need college for planned job	3%	Just don't like school
2%	My grades are not good enough	2%	I want to start a family
2%	I'm just not interested	2%	Some other reason
2%	I need or want to work	12%	Don't know
11%	Multiple Response		

37. Do you think you will be able to afford to attend a four-year college or university after high school?

7%	Definitely can't afford it	31%	Probably can afford it
8%	I doubt if I can afford it	15%	Definitely will be able to afford it
39%	I'm not sure		

	Yes	*No*
38. During the past year, have you discussed academic requirements for attending a four-year college with any adults in your household?	48%	52%

39. Have any of your family members attended college?	*Yes*	*No*
a. Mother or female guardian	40%	60%
b. Father or male guardian	29%	71%
c. Grandparent	33%	67%
d. Brother or sister	23%	77%

40. How much education do you think your father or male guardian wants you to get?

3%	Less than high school graduation	10%	Associate degree (2-yr pgm., AA, AS)
17%	High school graduation	24%	Bachelor degree (4-yr pgm., BA, BS)
4%	Certificate program (less than 2-yr pgm.)	43%	Advanced degree (master, doctorate)

41. How much education do you think your mother or female guardian wants you to get?

2%	Less than high school graduation	9%	Associate degree (2-yr pgm., AA, AS)
14%	High school graduation	24%	Bachelor degree (4-yr pgm., BA, BS)
5%	Certificate program (less than 2-yr pgm.)	46%	Advanced degree (master, doctorate)

Background

	Male	*Female*
42. What is your gender?	50%	50%

	11	*12*	*13*	*14*	*Other*
43. How old are you?	2%	71%	22%	5%	0%

44. How do you describe yourself?

4%	American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
0%	Asian	92%	White
1%	Black or African American	0%	Biracial
0%	Hispanic or Latino	2%	Multiracial

45. How many brothers do you have?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	29%	41%	18%	7%	4%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
46. How many sisters do you have?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	33%	37%	18%	7%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
47. Counting yourself, how many people live in your home?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	0%	0%	4%	19%	38%	23%	9%	4%	2%	1%

Aspirations

Use the following scale to indicate your level of agreement for each of the following items:

1 = Strongly Disagree (**SD**) 2 = Disagree (**D**) 3 = Don't Know (**DK**) 4 = Agree (**A**) 5 = Strongly Agree (**SA**)

(Highest percentages are in blue print)

		SD	*D*	*DK*	*A*	*SA*
48.	I need more education or training after high school to get a satisfying job.	6%	7%	19%	29%	**39%**
49.	I want to make some money immediately after high school.	2%	6%	18%	36%	**38%**
50.	I plan to continue my education after high school, no matter what my career.	5%	6%	19%	26%	**43%**
51.	I can get a satisfying job without further education after high school.	**26%**	24%	25%	16%	9%
52.	Continuing my education after high school might help me decide what to do.	4%	5%	18%	44%	28%
53.	I am anxious to begin my career as soon as possible after high school.	7%	14%	**28%**	27%	24%
54.	The opinions/plans of friends help me make decisions for after high school.	14%	21%	27%	29%	10%
55.	Getting a job right after high school might help me decide what I want to do.	9%	16%	31%	31%	13%
56.	I won't be able to afford to continue my education after high school.	22%	23%	37%	9%	8%
57.	The opinions/plans of family help me make decisions for after high school.	5%	9%	21%	43%	22%
58.	I can take control of situations.	3%	6%	24%	47%	20%
59.	I know what I want and I go after it.	2%	5%	20%	41%	32%
60.	I am a good leader.	3%	9%	37%	33%	17%
61.	I can select the best way to solve a problem.	4%	9%	37%	36%	14%
62.	I do what I say I will.	3%	9%	23%	45%	19%
63.	I usually have fun in class.	7%	12%	19%	45%	17%
64.	I am a positive role model to other students.	6%	9%	43%	29%	13%
65.	Teachers care about my problems and feelings.	6%	7%	32%	35%	20%
66.	Teachers respect my thoughts.	6%	6%	34%	37%	17%
67.	I seek solutions to complex problems.	3%	7%	31%	43%	15%
68.	I have a strong caring relationship with an adult.	3%	6%	19%	34%	**38%**
69.	Teachers care about my success in class.	3%	4%	20%	43%	30%
70.	I believe I can always improve.	1%	4%	9%	46%	40%
71.	Teachers expect me to succeed.	2%	2%	17%	46%	33%
72.	I am confident in my ability to do well.	2%	2%	13%	48%	35%

1 = Strongly Disagree (**SD**) 2 = Disagree (**D**) 3 = Don't Know (**DK**) 4 = Agree (**A**) 5 = Strongly Agree (**SA**)

		SD	*D*	*DK*	*A*	*SA*
73.	I take action on causes I believe in.	2%	4%	21%	46%	27%
74.	Teachers value my opinions.	5%	7%	37%	35%	16%
75.	I accept responsibility for my actions.	2%	4%	15%	51%	28%
76.	I am proud of my school.	6%	8%	18%	42%	26%
77.	Teachers help me to succeed.	2%	4%	16%	50%	28%
78.	I put forth the necessary effort to reach a goal.	2%	3%	15%	48%	32%
79.	Teachers support me when I try something new.	3%	6%	28%	42%	21%
80.	My courses help me to understand what is happening in my everyday life.	3%	8%	26%	43%	21%
81.	Teachers tell me I do a good job when I try my best.	3%	5%	15%	48%	28%
82.	I am eager to learn new things.	2%	5%	15%	46%	32%
83.	Teachers make learning exciting.	6%	15%	25%	37%	17%
84.	I have a teacher who is a positive role model for me.	6%	11%	27%	31%	25%
85.	Teachers allow me to explore topics I find interesting.	4%	9%	25%	43%	19%
86.	I am not usually bored in school.	15%	19%	20%	33%	14%
87.	Teachers expect me to be a good decision maker.	2%	5%	26%	42%	25%
88.	Anyone can succeed if they work hard enough.	2%	3%	10%	38%	47%
89.	I have opportunities to decide for myself what I learn about in school.	4%	6%	21%	42%	27%
90.	Teachers encourage me to ask questions.	4%	6%	18%	43%	30%

Items 63-90 are from the *Students Speak* survey developed by the National Center for Student Aspirations, College of Education and Human Development, University of Maine.

Aspirations Subscales

		Mean	Std. Dev.
1.	**Belonging:** A relationship between two or more individuals characterized by a sense of connection, support, and community.	3.58	0.81
2.	**Heroes:** People whom children admire and imitate because of their personal talent.	3.78	0.65
3.	**Sense of Accomplishment:** In addition to academic success, recognizes effort, perseverance, and citizenship as important signs of children's success.	4.03	0.70
4.	**Fun and Excitement:** Involves being interested in something, being emotionally involved, or having an intense experience or desire of some kind.	3.36	0.93
5.	**Spirit of Adventure:** Characterized as a child's ability to take on positive, healthy challenges.	3.79	0.65
6.	**Curiosity and Creativity:** Characterized as inquisitiveness, eagerness, a strong desire to learn new or interesting things, and a desire to satisfy the mind with new discoveries.	3.70	0.71
7.	**Leadership and Responsibility:** Children's sense of control and responsibility for their actions and words.	3.75	0.64
8.	**Confidence to Take Action:** The extent to which children believe in themselves and is related to self-regard, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-respect.	4.08	0.71

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